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ABSTRACT

Occupational experiences of former elementary-secondary school administrators as educational administration faculty are summarized in this report. Methodology involved a survey of 37 members of the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration and 123 educational administrative departments. Faculty respondents expressed an overwhelming satisfaction with their new careers; however, findings indicate some evidence of a gap existing between practitioners and professors of educational administration. A recommendation is made for the appointment of "clinical professors" to all educational administration faculties to develop respect between the clinical and academic branches of the profession. Clinical faculty duties would include teaching courses related to administrative experience and knowledge, and serving on various faculty committees. (LMI)

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# THE RETIRED SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

# AS

# PROFESSOR OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

A summary of a survey taken among members of the
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROFESSORS OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

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Summer 1990

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# INTRODUCTION

The author is a "retired" superintendent of public schools who is now engrossed and fairly well acclimated to his second career as a professor of educational administration professor. Genesis of the idea for this study admittedly comes from personal experience. At the 1989 NCPEA conference, the author met several new professors with similar backgrounds. From our discussions, a curiosity was born concerning the experiences of others like ourselves and the experiences of the institutions of NCPEA in employing retired practicing school administrators as professors of educational administrators. The survey upon which this report is based is a partial answer for our curiosity and is offered here for all our colleagues who may have some interest in the subject.

## Survey Highlights: Departmental Responses

Forty-six of the one hundred twenty-three responding departments (34%)* have employed retired administrators as professors in the last decade.

Thirty-five (46/76%) of departmental respondents, who have hired second career professors, indicate these colleagues have successfully accustomed themselves to higher education.

Thirty-seven (46/80%) of the departmental respondents report general satisfaction with their retired administrator/professors.

'Recency of K - 12 experience' was the major strength (40/87%) brought to hiring departments by retired administrator/ professors.

'Name recognition' (25/54%) and 'expertise in a subject matter discipline' (20/43%) were the second and third most frequently reported strength of the retired administrator/professor.

Thirty-two (70%) of the retired administrator/professors are on tenure tracks.

Associate professor was the most popular entry rank for the second career professors followed in rank order by assistant professor, full professor, instructor, and lecturer.

Courses in the principalship and personnel management (20@/44%) followed by school law, finance, and administrative leadership (16@/35%) were the most frequent teaching assignments for the retired administrator/professor.

Research (21/47%) and professional writing (24/52%) were understood as expected by the new professors. In this survey, respondents indicated that 74% (34) of their "other" educational administration colleagues were expected to write professionally and engage in research.

The hiring practices of most departments that have hired retired administrator/professors (31/67%) expect to continue to do so at their current level while seven (15%) expect to employ more retired administrator/professors in the future.

* Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole numeral.

## Survey Highlights: Retired Administrator/Professor Responses

Most (25/68%)* retired administrator/professors were superintendents prior to their higher education careers.

The most popular entry level rank (15/41%) for retired administrator/professors was associate professor.

The courses most frequently taught by the retired administrator/professors are: finance (13); law (9); superintendency (8); principalship (8); and community relations (8).

Sixty-seven and one-half percent (25) of the retired administrator/professors are on tenure track appointments.

Most respondents report they are expected to conduct research (20/54%) and publish scholarly materials (22/60%). They likewise believe that their continued employment (15/41%) and promotions (19/51%) depend on their research and writing activities.

Lack of secretarial support (20/54%) and institutional politics (16/43%) were the aspects of their new career they found most surprising.

All respondents, except one, (36/97%) report they generally enjoy their new careers. One respondent simply did not response to probe eleven.

* Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole numeral.

## QUESTIONNAIRE TABULATION: DEPARTMENTAL

Departmental Questions
on
Retired School Administrators as Professors
of
Educational Administration

1. Has your department, in the last ten academic years (80/81-89/90), employed one or more retired elementary/secondary school administrators as full-time professors of educational administration.

46 Yes 77 No
(123 usable returns)

If the first question is answered negatively, please return the questionnaire in the enclosed envelope provided. Thank you for helping us in this study.

Otherwise, please complete the questionnaire and return in the envelope provided.

2. How many retired elementary/secondary administrators has your department employed in the time period 1980-81 through 1989-90?

46

3. In your opinion, have these "second career" professionals made a successful transition to higher education?

35 yes 5 no 6 mixed experience

4. What has been the major strengths these professors have brought to your department? Check all that are applicable.

| Professor | | #1 | #2 | #3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. recency of K - 12 experience | a. | 40 | 18 | 6 |
| b. expertise in a subject discipline | b. | 20 | 18 | 4 |
| c. research production | c. | 5 | 7 | 6 |
| d. publication record | d. | 4 | 6 | 8 |
| e. name recognition | e. | 25 | 16 | 4 |

f. other reasons given
political/professional competencies
common sense or professional theory
willingness to work with schools

national reputation
working knowledge of state department of education
availability
testing ability
familiarity with students or graduate student needs
capacity for work
an understanding of the real world
practical approach
excellent teaching style
flexability
ability to communicate with practicing administrators
confidence of students
reasonable cost

5. If any of these "retread" professors are no longer with your department, what are the reasons? Check all that are applicable.

| | Professor | #1 | #2 | #3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. | expired | 1 | | |
| b. | illness | 2 | | 1 |
| c. | disillusioned with higher ed. | 1 | 1 | |
| d. | found work too demanding | 4 | 3 | |
| e. | took another higher ed. position | 2 | | 1 |
| f. | terminated | 2 | 1 | |
| g. | retired | 6 | | |
| h. | found other interests | 1 | | |

6. In general, have you been satisfied with your department's decisions to employ retired administrators as new educational administration professors?

37 Yes 6 No 3 Uncertain

7. Were these colleagues employed on a tenure track?

32 Yes 14 No

8. What was the entry rank of these new professors?

| | Instructor | Assistant | Assoc. | Full Prof. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| # in each category | 3 (Lecturer = 1) | 17 | 26 | 11 |

9. What three types of courses are most frequently taught by these new professors?

Departmental Retired Admininstrator/Professor Questionnaire Continued.

| | Professor # 1 | #2 | #3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Law | 16 | 3 | 4 |
| Finance | 16 | 5 | 1 |
| Superintendency | 15 | 5 | 3 |
| Principalship | 20 | 13 | 2 |
| Foundations of Administration | 15 | 9 | 2 |
| Policy Development | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| Administrative Leadership | 16 | 12 | 2 |
| Personnel Administration | 20 | 9 | 2 |
| Community Relations | 12 | 9 | 4 |
| Curriculum Development | 7 | 8 | 3 |
| Supervision | 9 | 7 | 4 |
| Community College Administration. | 1 | | |
| Educational Foundations | | | 1 |

10. Is conducting appropriate research a job expectation for these new professors?

21 Yes 13 Encouraged 10 No

11. Are the publication of journal articles and other scholarly writings a job expectation for these new professors?

24 Yes 11 Encouraged 9 No

12. Is writing and research a job expectation for other professors in your department?

34 Yes 10 Encouraged 1 No

13. In the future, do you expect your department to employ 7 more, 6 fewer, or 31 about the same number of retired administrators as professors?

Comments:

RESPONDENT COMMENTS
from
Departmental Questionnaire

Question # 1.

"We are under the same retirement system and they could not make more than ½ of their retirement base."

__X__ Yes "And, we are considering it at this time. Our observation of such people at other institutions has been that most do not, or can not, be productive in the university setting. We think many are too accustomed to giving orders and unaccustomed to doing research themselves!"

Question # 3.

"Absolutely"

Question # 4.

"A new law in Montana in 1986 makes early retirement (25 years) a possibility with a one-third time job in the system permitted. Our first retired superintendent will be employed this summer on a three year contract that may be renewed."

e. name recognition *

* This applies provided IT IS a nationally recognized administrator in a major university; a locally recognized administrator in a regional university.

Question # 5.

"retread" - "as in retread tire, poor substitute - bad word!! loaded with negative implications."

Question # 6.

"absolutely" Yes

__X__ Uncertain "I would feel more certain, if the movement also included the opposite direction."

"__X__ Yes "Personal, yes - but it appears that lately we have a hard time attracting them because of low salaries in higher education. When we do get applicants, it appears that many of them are in it for an extra retirement check."

Question # 8.

"Both had served the university as principals of the lab school prior to switching to the Educational Administration Department."

Question # 10.

_X_ Encouraged "But most lack research and writing skills."

Question # 11.

_X_ Encouraged "But most have no skill. Most are willing to learn if instruction is provided."

Comments. (general section reserved for comments)

"The credibility given to such professors by field administrators makes them highly desirable employees. 'Recent' administrative experience is generally a priority consideration in job descriptions/advertisements."

"In addition to the salary problems mentioned above, we see very few 'new docs' making application - may be a function of our size and location, but we still expect to get more than we do - our recruitment - or luck - in hiring women and minorities, however, has been quite good for recent hires."

"It appears to be much easier to move from administrative 'retirement' to higher ed than from higher ed to applied administration. The practitioners in the field seem to bias boards toward professors."

"They are diligent, effective, hard working - a breath of fresh air. Students think that they are superb."

"I don't think that retread professors are capable of making the teaching requirements or the research requirements in higher education in educational administration. I am dismayed with their practice - orientation and their inability to respond to higher education norms in teaching and research."

"The part-time situation is for an individual who teaches an occasional class. The major assignments are as Director of the College Alumni Group or Director of a 93 school district coalition."

"Some retired school administrators have been employed for 'adjunct' positions, but none has been employed in 'full time' positions."

"The one described here was a special case - generally we would turn to young men and women who have recently completed their doctoral programs as our new professors."

"Professors that retire should stay retired - older faculty members are out of touch."

"Two were excellent! One was a'bummer'."

"If it were up to me, I wouldn't employ any. I don't have good feelings about them. They don't give enough back to the department to warrant taking up an entire tenure track line."

"Great work ethic!"

"Experience in the public schools help the professor's credibility with his students - particularly in the field of Ed. Adm.."

"This person could not or would not adapt to not 'being the boss'."

"The problem with the employment of retired school administrators is that they teach the status quo. They don't keep up in their field. In more ways than one, they have retired."

"Very possibly our department will employ some other retired administrators."

"They don't write."

"Most hate the higher education scene. Will not or can not do much significant research. Most attain credibility with practitioners easily. Most struggle with the bureaucratic practices of universities. Tenure, salary, name recognition, etc. are items they hate adjusting to and most don't ever fully make the transition."

"I think your line of reasoning is limited. I see more and more part-time/retired people involved primarily because of institutional flexibility and also because many retired K - 12 folks don't want full time jobs or the expectations that campuses hold for new appointments.

## QUESTIONNAIRE TABULATION: RETIRED ADMINISTRATOR/PROFESSOR

Questionnaire for a Retired Elementary/Secondary School Administrator
Who Is Now a Professor of Educational Administration.
(37 Responses)

1. What was the date of your retirement as a practicing school administrator?

| | |
|---|---|
| 1967 - 1 | 1984 - 4 |
| 1974 - 1 | 1985 - 3 |
| 1976 - 1 | 1986 - 1 |
| 1978 - 2 | 1987 - 10 |
| 1981 - 1 | 1988 - 4 |
| 1982 - 1 | 1989 - 1 |
| 1983 - 2 | No Response - 3 |

2. In what semester/quarter (i.e. Fall '87) did you first become a full-time professor of educational administration?

| | 1980 | '81 | '82 | '83 | '84 | '85 | '86 | '87 | '88 | '89 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Summer | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fall | | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 5 | 3 |
| Winter | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Spring | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Year Only | (1976) | | | | 1 | | 2 | | 1 | | |
| No Response | 5 | | | | | | | | | | |

3. What was your job title prior to retiring as a school administrator?

| | |
|---|---|
| Superintendent | 25 |
| Associate Superintendent | 1 |
| Assistant Superintendent | 2 |
| Elementary Principal | 2 |
| Secondary Principal | 5 |
| No Response | 2 |

4. What was your entry rank?

| | |
|---|---|
| Lecturer | 2 |
| Visiting Professor | 2 |
| Substitute | 1 |
| Adjunct Professor | 1 |
| Instructor | 0 |
| Assistant Professor | 7 |
| Associate Professor | 15 |
| Professor | 7 |

5. What courses were you primarily expected to teach?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| a. | Finance | 13 |
| b. | Law | 9 |
| c. | Superintendency | 8 |
| d. | Principalship | 8 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| e. | Community Relations | 8 |
| f. | Administrative Leadership | 7 |
| g. | Supervision | 7 |
| h. | Personnel Administration | 7 |
| i. | Internship | 5 |
| j. | Policy Development | 3 |
| k. | Applied Research | 3 |
| l. | Organization Theory | 3 |
| m. | Foundations | 2 |
| n. | School Management | 2 |
| o. | Curriculum | 2 |
| p. | Community College Adm. | 2 |

6. Are you on a tenure track? 25 Yes 9 No
   No Response 2

7. Are you expected to -
   a. conduct research
      20 Yes 11 Encouraged 6 No
   b. publish scholarly materials
      22 Yes 10 Encouraged 5 No

8. Will your continued employment depend, in part, on your research and/or publication record?
   15 Yes 8 Uncertain 12 No

9. Will your promotions depend, in part, on your research and/or publication record?
   19 Yes 4 Uncertain 12 No
   (No Response 2)

10. What aspect of this second career was most surprising?

| | |
|---|---|
| 8 | a. arduous work load |
| 4 | b. committee responsibilities |
| 9 | c. research expectations |
| 9 | d. expectations to publish |
| 6 | e. demands of lecture preparations |
| 16 | f. internal departmental, college, and/or university politics |
| 0 | g. social expectations |
| 20 | h. lack of secretarial support |
| 1 | ( Lack of respect for previous work by university colleagues.) |
| 1 | ( Cumbersome university business procedures.) |
| 1 | ( Demands of two half-time assignments.) |
| 1 | ( Doctoral advising demands.) |
| 1 | ( Complete freedom - a holiday!) |

11. Do you generally enjoy this new career?

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | 36 |
| No | 0 |
| No Response | 1 |

12. In what year and semester do you, currently, expect to "retire" as a professor of educational administration?

| | | | Year Only | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fall | 1990 | - 1 | | |
| Spring | 1990 | - 1 | 1999 | - 1 |
| Summer | 1990 | - 1 | 2002 | - 1 |
| Winter | 1991 | - 1 | 2005 | - 1 |
| Spring | 1991 | - 1 | 2010 | - 2 |
| Spring | 1993 | - 2 | | |
| Summer | 1993 | - 3 | | |
| Spring | 1995 | - 1 | No Response/No Plans | |
| Summer | 1996 | - 2 | | |
| Spring | 1997 | - 1 | 11 | |
| Fall | 1999 | - 1 | | |
| Spring | 1999 | - 1 | | |
| Fall | 2000 | - 1 | | |
| Winter | 2000 | - 1 | | |
| Spring | 2000 | - 2 | | |
| Summer | 2000 | - 1 | | |

Comments:

PARTICIPANT COMMENTS
by
Formerly Retired K - 12 Administrators
Now Employed as Educational Administration Professors

Question # 8.

"I received tenure after my second year here."

"I have been employed for a period of not to exceed five years. This procedure allows the university to employ a person such as me as an associate professor on a non-tenured track."

Question # 10.

_X_ c. research expectations "without adequate support -- time/money."

Question # 11.

"Absolutely - it is a surprising delight after the rigors of being a high school principal for twenty-two years."

"Very much - I look forward to full time teaching rather than shared responsibilities with a professional organization and Assessment Center."

"I died and went to heaven." (from two respondents)

"Very much." (from seven respondents.)

"Much."

"Greatly."

"Yes, but I enjoy the teaching more than the 'other'".

"Definitely, the only negative is the salary. I am making $60,000 whereas my colleague superintendents (my old district) are making in the high $80,000's."

Question # 12.

"Have to haul me out."

Comments: (general section asking for comments)

"I am enjoying the teaching dimension of my job and the service that I provide for the people in the field. To

me, the service rendered is as important as publishing."

"I am a one-half time professor. I was employed and told that it was for a maximum of five years. At that time, they plan to employ another retiring superintendent."

"Twenty years in public education prepared me well to teach administration at the university."

"My transition was smoothed by the fact that I had served as an adjunct professor at a major university (twelve years). Also I had been a visiting professor and lecturer at several university."

"Some confusion exists about the terms 'retired' and 'retread'. Since they are used interchangeably, my responses have assumed a relatively "young" principal; who leaves (retires) the principalship should be included. If you truly want 'older' (ages 56 - 65) persons who have formally retired and then started teaching, neither of those questionnaires is valid.

We have not hired anyone full-time (nor do we intend to) who has formally retired from school administration. We might, however, use such people as adjunct cadre professors who teach one specific course." (This respondent's comments seem to be from a department head who indicates that his/her department has no intention of hiring "officially retired" or "retreaded" K - 12 administrators. Nevertheless, the respondent has completed this questionnaire which was directed to retired K - 12 administrators now in the educational administration professoriate.)

"The most important aspect of the job is to keep current with the field which I do through many outreach activities -- secondary accreditation, research studies (my own), and consulting, to name a few."

"I am also the Director of the Teacher Certification Office. I believe another 'good' question might have been, 'Do you have administrative as well as teaching duties?'."

## CONCLUSIONS

With slightly more than one-third of responding departments of educational administration reporting the hiring of retired administrator/professors in the last decade and with eighty percent of those indicating general satisfaction with these professors, the author concludes that the practice of hiring retired administrator/professors will continue to be a personnel policy in many institutions. The author failed to ask for data from the respondents as to the type of institution they represented (research, regional, etc.) which might have shown the employment of retired administrator/professors as a practice largely found in certain types or size of institution.

The data from both questionnaires clearly indicate that most retired administrator/professors are on tenure tracks and have acclimated themselves to its requirements. The majority of the professor respondents did not indicate that the expectations to conduct research and engage in scholarly writing was a surprise. It seems that most of the "retreads" did not come into higher education as a retirement lark, but to pursue the work with energy.

Overwhelmingly, the retired administrator/professors report that their new careers are enjoyable. Their plans for a second retirement showed no pattern or clusters.

An interesting discrepancy may be noted in the data regarding courses most often taught. The departmental respondents listed courses in the principalship and personnel management as the most frequent assignments; the professors report they taught courses in finance most often followed by courses in law, the principalship, and community relations. As only thirty-seven of the forty-six retired administrator/professors (as reported by respondent departments) responded to their questionnaire, perhaps the explanation could be found in the missing data from the other nine retired administrator/professors.

Judging from the comments included by various respondents, the author is concerned that a considerable gulf exists in some quarters between the practitioners of educational administration and the professors of educational administration. To the extent this is true, it is regrettable and harmful to the entire profession of educational administration. I suggest the appointment of 'clinical professors' to all educational administration faculties. These persons are proposed as clinical supervisors for student field experiences, but they should also occasionally teach an appropriate course, act as second or third members of thesis and dissertation committees, departmental curriculum committees, etc. Efforts should increase to develop respect and equality between the clinical and academic wings of our profession.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The greatest of thanks is offered to all respondents for your time in reading the questionnaires, responding and/or passing the materials to appropriate persons. I am especially indebted to Peter Husen and his clerical personnel for providing me with the mailing labels of the membership of the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration.

I thank Dean Lenore K. Bierbaum, College of Education, Southeast Missouri State University, for her encouragement and the Center for Assessment and Research in Education for funding.

To my departmental colleagues in educational administration who read, criticized, and suggested improvements in this paper, I humble say thank you. All the errors in style, technique, and conclusions are mine alone; believe me, they try to keep their one retired administrator/professor within the fence posts of higher education.

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